

**WASHINGTON, DC**— Congressman Joe Courtney today announced that the town of Plainfield and the Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area have secured grants worth \$46,450 and \$75,000, respectively. The grants come from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development program, which is designed to promote economic stability for communities, businesses, and farmers in rural areas.

The Plainfield grant will be used to install new handicapped-accessible sidewalks in Moosup Village. The existing, aging sidewalks are dilapidated and do not meet current ADA standards, creating a safety hazard.

"With tightening budgets, this funding will help the Town of Plainfield complete a project that is long overdue," said Congressman Courtney. "Having ADA-compliant sidewalks is beneficial and safer for everyone. Congratulations to First Selectman Paul Sweet on securing this grant in an extremely competitive environment."

The Rural Development funding comes on top of a \$200,000 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant that the Town recently secured to begin work on the sidewalk project.

"This grant on top of the STEAP funding we already received will make a big difference to our Town," said Paul Sweet, First Selectman of Plainfield. "This was the final piece in the puzzle."

The grant secured by the Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area will be used to green energy and energy efficiency measures. The organization will provide outreach, technical assistance, and grant-writing help to small businesses and farmers trying to invest in renewable energy.

"This grant will make a huge difference for farmers and small businesses that are looking for a solid long-term investment," said Congressman Courtney. "Improving energy efficiency not only has immediate job-creating benefits, but it saves money in the long run for businesses, allowing them to invest more."

Today's grant is the third phase of an ongoing project for the Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area. They have been helping small businesses and farmers apply for grants in New London, Windham and Tolland Counties for two years. The new funding will allow them to extend the program's scope across the State of Connecticut.